

Carolina University, a Master of Science in Systems Management from the University of Southern California, and a Master of Arts Degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my Colleagues join me in expressing our sincere appreciation to COL Tom Shubert for his outstanding service to both the Legislative and Executive Branches and to the United States Air Force.

I wish him, his wife Kathy, and their daughters Victoria and Joanna, the very best as they face new challenges in the coming years. I will miss his unfailing good humor and hard work. Colonel Shubert has consistently conducted himself in a professional manner and therefore brings great credit to the United States Air Force.

REINTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased on this first day of the 109th Congress to introduce several pieces of legislation that I have been pursuing over the years, and for which I will continue to advocate these next two years.

First, I am excited to again introduce legislation to help all American savers. My legislation, the Simple Savings Tax Relief Act of 2005, simply eliminates the taxation of interest earned in savings accounts, such as passbook savings accounts or bank certificates of deposit. I think at least some of this interest should be tax-free, as we have been working towards for other forms of non-earned income. This legislation would end a punitive tax, especially assist low and middle-income earners, and ultimately contribute toward the goal of encouraging individual responsibility and taking charge of one's own financial destiny.

Next, for years I have authored legislation to repeal the 2 percent excise tax on private foundations. The United States is blessed with a deep spirit of philanthropy, and charitable organizations serve the interest of both the individual and the community. Under current law, however, not-for-profit private foundations generally must pay to the IRS a 2 percent excise tax on their net investment income, which diverts from the purposes for which these foundations were founded. Optimistically, this body passed a reduction of this charitable impediment to 1 percent in the 108th (H.R. 7), but as it failed to become law, I am reintroducing this legislation and we shall try again.

Next, I am pleased to again sponsor the Health Care Tax Deduction Act of 2005. This would allow deductions for amounts paid for health insurance premiums and unreimbursed prescription drugs. This would provide much-needed relief to individuals struggling with the high cost of health insurance and prescription drugs through a tax deduction, and tax parity with those of us who have employer-provided tax-deductible health insurance. Expansively, this benefit extends to all IRS-defined health insurance premiums such as an HMO, PPO, a traditional indemnity plan, a new HSA, and also long-term care premiums. Right now, under the current tax code, in order to claim health care expenses individuals must file an

itemized tax return. My bill would simplify and extend this tax preference for all filers.

I also am reintroducing the Allied Health Reinvestment Act of 2005, along with my friend Dr. Strickland from Ohio. This important legislation offers incentives via scholarships and loans to encourage students and faculty to enter the essential but undersupplied allied health professions, such as physical, occupational, and speech rehabilitation, and medical and radiological technologists to name a few.

Also, with an eye towards the value of human life, I reintroduce my Human Cloning Research Prohibition Act, which restricts federal funding and encourages other nations to do so as well.

Finally, I am pleased to reintroduce a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of establishing a Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) awareness month. I do this again with my friend Mr. Lewis of Georgia. In past Congresses, this bill has had tremendous support from Members and from the U.S. COPD Coalition, which comprises the patient and provider community. The House passed this legislation in the summer of 2003, and we started a bicameral Caucus in the winter of 2004 to advance our efforts. COPD is an umbrella term used to describe the airflow obstruction associated mainly with emphysema and chronic bronchitis. This is a debilitating disease, that is currently the nation's fourth leading cause of death, and I am proud to bring awareness to COPD.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on all these important pieces of business for the nation.

HONORING ALBERT ASHBROOK FOR HIS SERVICE AS LICKING COUNTY COMMISSIONER

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, Mr. NEY and I wish to join many of our constituents in Licking County, Ohio in congratulating Albert Ashbrook, who is retiring after more than 16 years of service as a county commissioner.

Albert's work was summed up best recently by a former colleague, who noted that Albert never shied away from the tough issues and was always looking out for the best interests of the people and county government. We would add that he did so not only with a plain spoken dedication to duty, but also a tremendous sense of humor.

Licking County has grown and changed for the better during Albert's tenure. He's helped with the creation of a Domestic Relations Court, a one-stop employment service and improved auto licensing and titling facilities, just to name a few of the projects in which he has had a hand. At the same time, he's always made fiscal responsibility a top priority.

Public service has been a way of life for Albert. Prior to his work as a commissioner, he served in various capacities with the Soil and Water Conservation District, and is a member of the District Hall of Fame.

Although he's leaving the commissioners' office, Albert is hoping to continue his community involvement as a member of the Licking County Planning Commission. In any event,

we know he'll still be there to offer guidance and advice to anyone with the good sense to seek it.

We are honored to have this opportunity to thank Albert for all his hard work, and wish him and his wife Shirley many more active years together.

IN HONOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS LONGHORNS ROSE BOWL CHAMPIONS

HON. LAMAR S. SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the University of Texas Longhorns, playing in the Rose Bowl for the first time in the team's 110-year history, made the New Year's Day game a memorable one.

Twice the Longhorns came from behind the Michigan Wolverines to win 38–37 as the clock ran out in what many contend was the most exciting Rose Bowl ever. UT Quarterback Vince Young rushed for 192 yards and four touchdowns, a Rose Bowl record. He also threw for 180 yards and a touchdown. This capped a 10–1 regular season record.

The University of Texas has a great football team, coached by Mack Brown. But it has a great academic reputation, too.

Led by President Larry Faulkner, UT recently was ranked as the 15th best university in the world by the Times of London newspaper. Among U.S. public universities, only the University of California at Berkeley was listed ahead of UT.

It's a pleasure to cite the strengths of UT. It's also a pleasure to represent such a premiere University in Congress.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker I rise today to honor the 100th birthday of the Minnesota State Capitol. The Capitol first opened its doors on January 2, 1905 and on January 2, 2005, over 6,000 people attended the first of a full year's worth of birthday celebrations.

The Minnesota State Legislature first met in a log hotel when Minnesota was declared a territory in 1849. The first Capitol building was built in 1853, but burned in 1881. The second, built in 1882, was erected on the same downtown St. Paul site as the first. As Minnesota's population grew, officials realized that the building would soon be too small to house the Legislators and a new building would be needed. In 1895, Cass Gilbert from St. Paul was selected to design the new building. It took nine years and \$4.5 million to complete construction of the new capitol, which is still in use today.

Today, the Minnesota State Capitol building is more than just a place for the Legislature. It is a museum dedicated to preserving Minnesota's history. Its many priceless artifacts